FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) to (c) The Government are initiating steps to make available good quality medicinal plants, setting up a Medicinal Plants Board, Preparing Schemes to assist upgradation of State Pharmacies and Laboratories, introducing good manufacturing practices to be followed by manu-facturers and prescribing for some basic tests on drugs to ensure their safety and public acceptability. In addition, preparation of formulary and Pharmacopoeial standards are also undertaken and good progress has been made.

Demand for accupuncture system of treatment

3699. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a growing demand from the public in favour of adopting the accupuncture system of treatment in public hospitals; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to concede the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRUI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) and (b) Accupuncture is not recognised by the Government as an Alternative system of Medicine. However, accupuncture therapy is being as one of the treatment modalities for relief of pain, in some Central Government Hospitals like Safdarjung Hospital and LHMC & Associated Hospitals at Delhi.

Eighth India Population Project

3700. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the expansion of there non- going World Bank assisted Eight-India Population Project;

(b) if so, the details of the projects in Bihar and West Bengal;

(c) whether Government propose to start any special development projects for tribals;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

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†Original Notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI NT. SHANMUGAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has approved the expansion of the ongoing World Bank assisted Eighth India Population Project (IPP-VHI) currently under implementation in the cities of Bangalore, Calcutta, Delhi and Hyderabad to 94 additional cities/ towns in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and West Bengal. Besides, Uttar Pradesh and Tamilnadu have been covered for improvement of the logistic facilities. The Project cost has also been revised from Rs. 223.37 crores to Rs. 422.01 crores and the Project period extended from 6.8.1998 to 30th June, 2001. While Bihar is not covered by this project, it has been extended to 10 additional cities in West Bengal, namely, Siliguri, Durgapur, Bardhman, Kharagpur, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Balurghat, Raiganj, English Bazar and Alipur Duar in addition to Calcutta at a total cost of Rs. 133.80.

(c) to (e) As the Eighth India Population Project aims at improving the health and family welfare status of urban slums population in selected Cities, no tribal areas have been included under this Project. However, in tribal areas, relaxed norms are being followed for setting up rural health infrastructural facilities. A Community Health Centre, a Primary Health Centre and a sub-centre are opened in tribal areas for a population of 80,000,20,000 and 30,000 as against 1,20,000, 3,000 and 5,000 respectively in other areas. The Government is also encouraging NGO involvement in reaching health care to the tribal population.

International congress on "Ayurveda- 2000'

3701. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an International Congress, "Ayurveda 2000' was held in Chennai in the last week of January;

(b) if so, the achievements of the Congress; and

(c) how Government propose to promote Ayurveda, a system of Indian medicine, so that it reaches the poor and the needy persons, even in remote villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) Sowparnika Ayurvedic Foundation for Research. Health & Education in collaboration with other institutes organised an International Conference on Ayurveda, 2000 at Chennai.